

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, substantially comprising a sequence of amino acids 1-328 represented by SEQ ID NO: 1.
2. (original) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase according to claim 1, wherein a dehydration reaction is accelerated by acting on 2,7-dihydroxy-4'-methoxyisoflavanone or 2,5,7-trihydroxy-4'-methoxyisoflavanone to thereby generate formononetin or biochanin A.
3. (currently amended) A polynucleotide, substantially comprising:
 - a nucleotide sequence encoding the 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase according to claim 1 [[or 2]]; or
 - a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence.
4. (original) A polynucleotide, which encodes a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase consisting of 1-1178 bases, and is represented by SEQ ID NO: 2.
5. (original) A polynucleotide, having 50% or more homology to a nucleotide sequence included in SEQ ID NO: 2, and encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase.

6. (currently amended) A polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 5~~ claim 3, which is obtained by cloning from *Glycyrrhiza echinata*.

7. (original) A polynucleotide, which hybridizes at least part of a polynucleotide having a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence.

8. (original) A polynucleotide, which can function as a primer or a probe for a nucleotide sequence encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase or cDNA of the 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, which can be hybridized with a successive sequence of at least 15 of SEQ ID NO: 2 or a polynucleotide complementary to the successive sequence.

9. (currently amended) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3.

10. (currently amended) A method of dehydrating a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone comprising using a protein encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3.

11. (currently amended) A method of producing an isoflavonoid comprising using at least flavanone, 2-hydroxyisoflavanone synthase (IFS), and a protein encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3.

12. (currently amended) A vector, comprising the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3 inserted therein.

13. (currently amended) A recombinant DNA or RNA, comprising an expression system from which the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3 can be expressed in a host cell.

14. (original) A host cell transformed by the vector according to claim 12.

15. (original) A transformed host cell according to claim 14, wherein the host cell comprises yeast.

16. (original) A host cell according to claim 14, wherein the host cell comprises a recombinant *E. coli* cell of Accession No: FERM BP-08662.

17. (currently amended) A method of manufacturing 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, comprising incubating the host cell according to ~~any one of claims 14 to 16~~ claim 14.

18. (currently amended) A method of producing isoflavonoid comprising using the host cell according to ~~any one of claims 14 to 16~~ claim 14.

19. (currently amended) A method of producing isoflavonoid comprising using a host cell transformed by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3 and a polynucleotide encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone synthase (IFS).

20. (currently amended) A transgenic plant, comprising the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 3 to 6~~ claim 3 introduced therein.

21. (original) A transgenic plant according to claim 20, wherein the transgenic plant comprises a leguminous plant.
22. (currently amended) A method of producing isoflavonoid comprising using the plant according to claim 20 [[or 21]].
23. (currently amended) A method of modifying isoflavonoid comprising using the plant according to claim 20 [[or 21]].
24. (original) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, substantially comprising a sequence of amino acids 1-319 represented by SEQ ID NO: 3.
25. (original) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase according to claim 24, wherein a dehydration reaction is accelerated by acting on 2,7,4'-trihydroxyisoflavanone or 2,5,7,4'-tetrahydroxyisoflavanone to thereby generate daidzein or genistein.
26. (currently amended) A polynucleotide, substantially comprising:
a nucleotide sequence encoding the 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase according to claim 24 [[or 25]]; or
a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence.
27. (original) A polynucleotide, which encodes a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase consisting of 1-960 bases, and is represented by SEQ ID NO: 4.
28. (original) A polynucleotide, having 50% or more homology to a nucleotide sequence included in SEQ ID NO: 4, and encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase.

29. (currently amended) A polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 28~~ claim 26, which is obtained by cloning from soybeans.

30. (original) A polynucleotide, which hybridizes at least part of a polynucleotide having a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4 or a nucleotide sequence complementary to the nucleotide sequence.

31. (original) A polynucleotide, which can function as a primer or a probe for a nucleotide sequence encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase or cDNA of the 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, which can be hybridized with a successive sequence of at least 15 of SEQ ID NO: 4 or a polynucleotide complementary to the successive sequence.

32. (currently amended) A 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26.

33. (currently amended) A method of dehydrating a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone comprising using a protein encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26.

34. (currently amended) A method of producing an isoflavonoid comprising using at least flavanone, 2-hydroxyisoflavanone synthase (IFS), and a protein encoded by the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26.

35. (currently amended) A vector, comprising the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26 inserted therein.

36. (currently amended) A recombinant DNA or RNA, comprising an expression system from which the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26 can be expressed in a host cell.

37. (original) A host cell transformed by the vector according to claim 35.

38. (original) A transformed host cell according to claim 37, wherein the host cell comprises yeast.

39. (original) A host cell according to claim 37, wherein the host cell comprises a recombinant *E. coli* cell of Accession No: FERM BP-08661.

40. (currently amended) A host cell transformed by a vector where a polypeptide encoding a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone synthase (IFS) is inserted and a vector where the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26 is inserted.

41. (original) A transformed host cell according to claim 40, wherein the host cell comprises yeast.

42. (original) A host cell according to claim 41, wherein the host cell comprises a recombinant yeast *E. coli* cell of Accession No: FERM BP-08663.

43. (currently amended) A method of manufacturing 2-hydroxyisoflavanone dehydratase, comprising incubating the host cell according to ~~any one of claims 37 to 42~~ claim 37.

44. (currently amended) A method of producing isoflavonoid comprising using the host cell according to ~~any one of claims 37 to 42~~ claim 37.

45. (currently amended) A transgenic plant, comprising the polynucleotide according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~ claim 26 introduced therein.

46. (original) A transgenic plant according to claim 45, wherein the transgenic plant comprises a leguminous plant.

47. (currently amended) A method of producing isoflavonoid comprising using the plant according to claim 45 ~~[[or 46]]~~.

48. (currently amended) A method of modifying isoflavonoid comprising using the plant according to claim 45 ~~[[or 46]]~~.

49. (original) A polynucleotide, encoding an enzyme having a motif of carboxylesterase and catalyzing a dehydration reaction.

50. (original) A polynucleotide, encoding an enzyme having a motif of carboxylesterase and catalyzing a dehydration reaction of a 2-hydroxyisoflavanone.